

Bradford, Wrosted, & p. 80 m. 1843

Bradford, Wrosted, & p. 80 m. 1843
A Morning in a Bradford Wrosted Factory.

Bradford, the "Metropolis of Wrosted," abuts on the coal field which stretches from Leeds to Nottingham, & many labourers are employed in the coal-pits, in extensive iron-works, & in the numerous quarries which surround the town; ^{but} still, the 28,000, or so, operatives who should be engaged in the 140 Wrosted Factories of the Borough form the main body of the working population. These are, chiefly, wool-sorters, & the operatives, women & girls for the most part, who attend to the combing, carding, drawing, roving, spinning & weaving machines; besides packers, overlookers & clerks.

Before we investigate the nature of these several callings, let us consider upon what qualities in the wool itself its value to the manufacturer depends. Wool is a sort of hair, but distinguished from hair strictly so called by being always more or less wavy or curly; & also by the fact that each wavy fibre has jagged edges, being encased in armour of microscopic scales, the points of which protrude not more than the two- or three-thousandth part of an inch, but are yet capable of catching in on another. The spiral nature of the fibres causes them to retain the twist the yarn receives in the spinning.

in the open market, 2 up to 1000 13

Cragsdale village, with ^{one} well-stocked general
shop, where the villagers, from neighbouring hamlets,
Though its situation is perfect. Some of its out-lying
houses are delightfully placed on a brow overlooking
the valley. Cragsdale itself is not attractive; it
is an overgrown village consisting of a long, straight
main street, with so many houses that there is little
space for gardens. At the present time, the aspect
of the place is desolate enough; the Cragsdale Lead
Minerals have been closed within the past year,
+ as a consequence, the population of this
^{neighbourhood} ~~district~~ is declining fast. These mines, the
property of the Duke of Devonshire, lie in the wide
heath-covered moor which rises behind the ^{village} town, &
for fully two centuries they have afforded the
principal industry of the place. In early find-
ings promise tremendous wealth, great veins
of ore, which descended straight into the earth
appearing even upon the surface; but the lodes
are irregular & capricious in their ramifications,
can only be followed at a cost which the
guild has not been found to pay.

So hard is it to track out the tortuous courses
of the rich veins, that, for the aid of the miners,
the bowels of the earth are - according to local
superstition - peopled with a race of "knockers,"
small green folk whose business it is to
lead their paces by means of mysterious
tappings, to the spot where metal is to be found.
These would appear to be amov friendly
fairy-folk from the pixies of Devon; no
mischievous pranks or recorded do-
them

them, but thrifty labours, in moorland
cottages as well as in mine, carried on usually
by night.

Grassington Mines lie in a wide, level forested
moor which rises behind the town, to the north and
they do not appear to have been worked ~~for~~ ^{since} the
~~beginning~~ ^{beginning} of the seventeenth century.

Lead is widely diffused in the ~~country~~ ^{district}
especially in the mill-stone of the higher hills.
~~formation~~ ^{fact} of this district, water-wheel, &
pewee chimney break the level they lie
on many of the hills, a steep mountain with
marks the daily track of the miners who
dwell in the villages below. A curious
evidence of the antiquity of some of these
mines is found in the fact that the Norman
Churches & chapels in the valley are all
roofed with lead, - too costly a covering for these
rust structures had not the metal been plentiful
& near at hand.

Grassington lies some 200 feet above the
sea level, on the slope which rises from the
left-bank of the river. ~~immediately above the~~
~~characteristic~~. At this point, the wide open
dale has none of the depressing character of
a valley: the hills do not crowd round it,
nor overshadow, nor enclose it. They simply
form the crest of the gradual slope ^{upward}
~~from the bed of the river, do not shut out~~
~~nor shut in~~

27p11m29 14
a ~~single~~ air of measure. Upon climbing the fells
in either direction, you perceive that Wharfedale is
but a lovely green, shallow dip in the wide
moorlands; you find yourself in the
very heart of the central axis of elevation.
Consequently the air is peculiarly bracing,
reminding one of the keen delight of breathing
at the Hallstead.

To return to the Ghaistrills: here, as at Bolton,
there is a Strid, a name which is ^{variously} explained
to mean, a striding place, or a place of
strife - the endless struggle & turmoil
of waters. Higher up, the river is a fairly
broad & rapid stream, but here, it makes
its way between sheets of grey rock through
an opening that a man may stride across.
Between these rocks the river tumbles,
eddies, & boils, in black & white foam
does not curl over it, for in one hole, which is
called the Parlour, the depth is not less than
eighteen feet. Again the stream widens,
but there are masses of green rock strewn
in the channel over which the water breaks.
Some of them, long & flat - like grave stones, ^{long}
upright; & possibly it is to these that the
name owes its weird name. Not that they
resemble ghosts in figure - doubtless
every accredited ghost has a more or less
human form - but it is the colour, the ghastly
grey-white of death itself, enhanced by the water
to

trappings laid on by the heavy-fingered moss!
Visit the spot by daylight; you may think this
name fanciful, but for there in the moonshine
& the weird unearthly plannings of the scene
take possession of you; you are ready
to believe that the spot is haunted, though
no lingering traditions account for its
~~ghost~~ ^{unhappy} name. Give, - the ghost. You are content
to leave to ~~God~~ ^{Whatever} the choice between
Ghaist~~stills~~ - rills, & "Gast - Thrills, the narrow
penning of the ~~ghost~~." But alas for any
tray that savours of the supernatural &
romantic! Dr. Dixon, a local antiquary,
contends for "Gay Stills," i.e. 'Gay' or good
stiles or 'studdles' - pronounced trippingly
'Stills'. Then follows a slight sneer
at the expense of the learned historian of
Craven, which receives point from the fact
that, "in our dialect a 'ghost' is not a 'ghaist'
but a 'goast'."

Kaly

17

Half a mile lower down is the stone bridge of
five arches which forms part of the Skipton
Road. At this point, & beyond it, the river again
spreads abroad, clear & beautiful, with a frequent
current - & a delightful murmuring sound.
It has so little depth, however, that anglers
may be seen standing knee-deep, almost
in mid-stream. That is to say it is shallow
in dry weather, but the Wharfe is 'in flood'
upon little provocation & this is a region of
much rain. The ^{hills} hills lift their heads amongst
the low-sailing clouds heavy with moisture
from the western seas: contact with the
cold hill-tops causes the clouds to drop
in frequent, & often very violent rains.
Then every swollen brook hastening down
a rapid slope, pours its floods into the already
over-full Wharfe. Which, for the time, assumes
the dimensions of great rivers, impetuous
& full as the Rhine at Bâle, & as fascinating
to the looker-on in its eager flow. These
floods are often seasons of havoc, marked by the
destruction of sheep & even of cattle by the overthrow
of the bridges. Perhaps the greatest inundation
on record is that of September 11th, 1673, which
"overthrew Kettlewell Bridge, Burnley Bridge, Earsby
Bridge, & Bolton Bridge, Skelby Bridge & Otley Bridge, &
the greatest part of the water-mills." (Otley Parish Register).
Indeed, Grassington Bridge seems to have proved itself
the strongest in the valley.
Persons not accustomed to consider the astonishing
power of running water, rushing down steep declivities, will

270196MC34

with some surprise the becks of this district offer
more dribblets of water at the bottoms of deep rock
gullies. Have they followed the courses of existing
courses, or is it possible that their insignificant
streams have scooped out for themselves such
disproportionate channels? We saw the other day
the bed of a beck, which enters the Wharfe below
Linton, a few days after it had been flooded
by violent rains. Where well-trodden, a road was
the snow leading to the passing for lead mines
crossed the stream, which was hardly discernible
at the bottom of a gill, perhaps sixty feet in depth.
Three days before, the beck had filled this channel
in ^{for} spread far beyond its banks. The road which
acted as a dam, had been partly torn down, &
a wide spread, thick stratum, newly laid, of pebbles,
stones, & sand, testified to the power of water was
now a thread of water as a denuding & carrying
agent. That it should have had force to
scoop out in process of time, this deep gully
was no longer matter of surprise when we saw
the immense quantity of pebbly matter which
had been torn down & carried along by this
hastent beak in a single flood.

It occurred to us that the great conical
hills which ^{rise} round the base of the long fell
to the south east of Grassington might also
be an effect of water denudation. They
would be considered high hills in a less
mountainous ~~country~~ district. They are
covered with vividly green rich grass & are
adorned with wild thyme. From their curious
roofs